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WASHINGTON, DC – For your consideration, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) chairman Leonard Leo and vice chair Elizabeth Prodromou published the following commentary on Germany and religious freedom in *The Huffington Post* on August 16, 2010.

[Click here to view the entire op-ed.](#)

### **A New Partnership for Religious Freedom**

Leonard A. Leo and Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou

The global community may have a new advocate for international religious freedom-- Germany.

Chancellor Angela Merkel declared before a Protestant parliamentary working group in June that protection of religious freedom is an important part of its foreign policy and human rights efforts and stated that Germany “must act on behalf of human rights in all parts of the world.” She also noted that, “We have no right to sit down after our own dignity has been protected and to no longer care what happens to the dignity of others.”

While the Chancellor's remarks focused largely on the persecution of only one religious group, Christians, the principles she laid down can have universal reach, with applicability to the many, diverse religious communities around the globe. Her remarks present the possibility of sparking a growing partnership between the United States and Germany to work together to promote freedom of religion or belief for all.

USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government commission. USCIRF Commissioners are appointed by the President and the leadership of both political parties in the Senate and the House of Representatives. USCIRF's principal responsibilities are to review the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom internationally and to make policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State and Congress.

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